

California Monthly Climate Summary January 2006

Summary

January 2006 was a mixed month for the state of California. Most of the month's storms continued to be limited to Northern California. The Northern California 8 station index totaled 9.9 inches of precipitation for January which is 10% above the long term January average of 9 inches for this index. Southern California stayed dry for the month with below average precipitation. Monthly precipitation for the 10 hydrologic regions in the state and statewide average is shown below.

Temperatures across the state fluctuated in a wintertime pattern as the strong zonal flow of December was replaced by a cyclic ridge/trough pattern for most of January. The first part of January saw a strong ridge in place over California from January 4th through the 12th. This ridge broke down allowing a series of storms to cross the north part of the state in the second half of the month. The latter part of January saw a return to the more zonal flows similar to December. Snow levels returned to their normal levels with the colder storms hitting the state.

The first snow surveys for the state measured the January snowpack. Results of this survey show that the snowpack in California's Sierra Nevada mountain range is slightly above average for this time of year. Deviations above average increase from north to south.

The El Nino/Southern Oscillation is currently in a La Nina pattern where cooler than average water extends across the central tropical Pacific Ocean. Under these conditions, storm tracks approaching North America generally shift northward from their usual paths which lead to drier than normal conditions for Southern California. The impact on Northern California is less clear as both wet and dry extremes have occurred in Northern California during La Nina years. La Nina conditions are expected to persist through at least mid year.

Statewide Extremes

High Temperature – 97 deg F (Camp Pendleton, CA)

Low Temperature - -19 deg F (Crabtree Meadow, Kern River)

High Precipitation – Smith River 21.2 inches

Low Precipitation – many stations with 0 inches

Other Climate Summaries

[California Climate Watch \(DRI\)](#)

[Golden Gate Weather Service Climate Summary](#)

For anomaly information please see http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/anom/cal_anom.html

Statewide Precipitation Statistics

Hydrologic Region	Region Weight	Basins Reporting			Stations Reporting			Percent of Historic Average	
		Basins	Jan	Oct-Jan	Stations	Jan	Oct-Jan	Jan	Oct-Jan
NORTH COAST	0.27	5	4	4	19	11	10	146%	162%
SAN FRANCISCO BAY	0.03	2	2	2	6	2	2	102%	126%
CENTRAL COAST	0.06	3	2	2	11	4	4	160%	92%
SOUTH COAST	0.06	3	3	3	15	12	10	45%	41%
SACRAMENTO RIVER	0.26	5	5	5	43	29	29	99%	149%
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER	0.12	6	6	6	25	14	13	123%	124%
TULARE LAKE	0.07	5	5	5	28	22	22	136%	104%
NORTH LAHONTAN	0.04	3	3	3	14	12	11	114%	163%
SOUTH LAHONTAN	0.06	3	2	2	15	3	3	91%	84%
COLORADO RIVER	0.03	1	1	1	6	3	3	11%	80%
STATEWIDE WEIGHTED AVERAGE	1.00	36	33	33	182	112	107	115%	130%

Statewide Mean Temperature Data by Hydrologic Region

Hydrologic Region	Number Stations	Minimum	Average	Maximum
North Coast	29	33.1	39.0	46.3
SF Bay	11	41.6	47.1	53.4
Central Coast	16	40.4	48.9	60.4
South Coast	58	41.4	51.1	63.3
Sacramento	102	32.6	39.0	46.9
San Joaquin	84	31.2	39.8	50.6
Tulare Lake	24	23.3	33.0	45.1
North Lahontan	27	21.4	29.7	38.5
South Lahontan	17	23.3	32.8	44.7
Colorado River	8	38.5	49.9	63.0
Statewide Weighted Average	376	31.9	39.8	49.7

Summary of Snow Surveys

Region	No. Basins	No. Courses	Avg WC	% Average April 1	% Average February 1
North Coast	3	12	26.1"	86%	138%
Sacramento	6	71	16.3"	51%	80%
San Joaquin Valley	5	61	25.0"	76%	120%
Tulare Lake	4	40	19.4"	78%	129%
North Lahontan	3	14	17.9"	78%	124%
South Lahontan	2	19	20.2"	105%	167%
Statewide Average (weighted)				69%	110%